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SUBJECT: Embassy Minsk FY-07 Proposal for Television Co-Op on
Electronic Fraud

Ref: State 7720

¶1. Per reftel, Embassy Minsk submits the following nomination for consideration in the Department's TV Co-Op program for fiscal year ¶2007.

¶2. Post would like to produce a documentary on the topic of Electronic Fraud, and has located a local television broadcaster that is interested and eager to have the opportunity to complete a film on this topic.

¶3. Electronic Fraud is a challenging global issue and remains a focus of law-enforcement authorities both in the United States and Belarus. Our nominees would benefit from meeting with law enforcement agencies, both local and federal (including the Secret Service and FBI) who track this problem, as well as information technology companies, bank managers and NGO's working in this field. A range of electronic fraud issues will be covered, including credit card fraud, personal identity theft and computer hacking, "phishing" and denial of service attacks.

¶4. The topic of Electronic Fraud is of mutual interest to the United States and Belarus. As e-commerce continues to grow in Belarus, the amount of electronic fraud here will rise accordingly. In addition, a disproportionate number of electronic fraud cases originate in the area of the former Soviet Union, including Belarus, and this documentary film will help to educate the Belarusian public and government officials about this problem.

¶5. Post has discussed this opportunity with "Channel 2", a non-state television broadcaster based in Mogilyov, a regional capital in eastern Belarus, and the station's management have shown a strong interest in this program, proposing a two-person crew to cover this topic and agreeing to air the documentary upon the crew's return to Belarus.

¶6. "Channel 2" was founded in 1991 and now covers a broadcast area of approximately 30 miles around Mogilyov with a potential audience of 500,000 people. Through its affiliation with the "TBN" television network, it is likely that the syndicated broadcast of this documentary could reach 3.2 million people, approximately one-third of Belarus' total population. "Channel 2" currently employs approximately 35 people, many of whom are alumni of a range of training programs offered previously by IREX and Internews. "Channel 2" is well equipped with the necessary audio/visual equipment and will most probably film with a mini-DV camera.

¶7. "Channel 2" specifically requests that travel to the United States take place during the summer months between June and September.

¶8. Post will cover international airfare for the two-person crew (journalist, camera operator). Post understands that the remainder of expenses (domestic airfares, accommodation, M&IE) will be covered by the Department.

